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INFO RUEHZS/ASSOCIATION OF SOUTHEAST ASIAN NATIONS  
RUCNMEM/EU MEMBER STATES COLLECTIVE  
RUEHBJ/AMEMBASSY BEIJING 9614  
RUEHMO/AMEMBASSY MOSCOW 1580  
RUEHNE/AMEMBASSY NEW DELHI 1189  
RUEHUL/AMEMBASSY SEOUL 9926  
RUEHKO/AMEMBASSY TOKYO 3704  
RUCNDT/USMISSION USUN NEW YORK 0837  
RUEHBS/USEU BRUSSELS

C O N F I D E N T I A L CANBERRA 000892

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DEPARTMENT EAP/MLS FOR SCHIEBE  
NSC FOR WALTON

E.O. 12958: DECL: 09/29/2019  
TAGS: [PREL](#) [PGOV](#) [BM](#) [AS](#)  
SUBJECT: AUSTRALIA SUPPORTS NEW BURMA APPROACH

REF: STATE 100518

Classified By: Political and Economic Counselor Edgard Kagan for Reason  
s 1.4 (b/d)

¶1. (C/NF) Summary: Australia supports the Burma Policy Review Conclusions and is conducting its own review of Burma policy. Brendon Hammer, First Assistant Secretary for Southeast Asia at the Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade, reacted very positively to the Burma Policy Review Conclusions (reftel) and termed new engagement with Burma as "worth trying." He thanked us for delivering the points prior to public release and noted that the Australian Embassy would likely seek clarification in Washington on our approach to the 2010 elections. Hammer did not have a time frame for completion of Australia's Burma policy review, stating that it will be less formal than what we have done and that it will ultimately come down to a discussion between Prime Minister Rudd and Foreign Minister Smith. End Summary.

#### Australia Supports Engagement

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¶2. (C/NF) Poleconconcouns delivered reftel demarche on September 29 and stressed the significance of the new U.S. willingness to engage with Burma. Hammer said Australia fully supports the new policy, especially since it negates the argument made by many countries that the problem was lack of U.S. engagement. He was not optimistic, but said new engagement was well worth the effort. Hammer wondered how other countries in the region would react and promised to apprise us of anything Australia hears in the regional capitals. He noted that that China doesn't want Burma to "go the way of North Korea."

#### Australian Burma Policy Review

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¶3. (C/NF) Hammer also told us that the Australians are currently conducting their own Burma policy review. He did not know when the review would be complete, nor did he think it would lead to a formal policy document. To his knowledge, Hammer did not think Prime Minister Rudd and Foreign Minister Smith had formally discussed Burma. On timing, Hammer speculated that Foreign Minister Smith might make some statement to Parliament on Burma towards the end of October when Australian sanctions come up for renewal.

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